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ABSIRACT

THIS COLLECTION OF REPRINTED SPEECHES DELIVERED AT THE 1967 CHIC CONFERENCE ON DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN COVERS THE FOLLOWING TOPICS: LEARNING AS THE DISCOVERY OF PERSONAL MEANING, OCCUPATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING, CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATICN ACT, TITLE I PROGRAMS, THE INHERENT DIFFICULTIES OF CUITURAI CONFLICTS IN TEACHING MINORITY GROUP CHILDREN, AND THE TEACHING OF LANGUAGE ARTS. (KG)

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# OHIO CONFERENCE ON DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

May 18-19 1967

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION OHIO

Martin W. Essex
*State Superintendent of Public Instruction*
*State of Ohio*

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RAYMOND A. HORN
*Director Division of Federal Assistance*
*Ohio Department of Education*

# FOREWORD

Through Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, American schools have been charged anew with the responsibility for improving the educational attainment of an all-too-often neglected segment of the student population, the educationally disadvantaged. These are children who, for many different reasons, have been unable to profit from the opportunities and experiences that schools have provided. Although schools have responded with characteristic enthusiasm, the development of compensatory programs for educationally disadvantaged children has posed problems in education which are both unique and difficult.

To help educators better understand educationally deprived children, the Ohio Department of Education, in cooperation with the Ohio Association of School Administrators, held the Ohio Conference on Disadvantaged Children, May 18-19, 1967, in Columbus, Ohio. The major speeches of the Conference are included in this printed report.

As Director of the Ohio Division of Federal Assistance, I would like to express our appreciation to the United States Office of Education for sending Dr. John F. Staehle, Assistant Director for Policy and Procedures, Division of Compensatory Education, and Miss Jane Ritter, Program Officer, Region V, Chicago, to this Conference.

Appreciation is also extended to School Management Institute for handling conference arrangements as well as the preparation of this publication.

*Raymond A. Horn*

DR. RICHARD H. USHER
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# LEARNING as the DISCOVERY of PERSONAL MEANING

*Dr. Richard H. Usher*

Modern psychology tells us that people do not behave according to the facts as others see them; they behave in terms of what seems to them to be so. Behavior is a personal matter. What affects human behavior, we are beginning to understand, is not so much the forces or stimuli that impinge on people from their external environments as the *meanings* existing for the individual from within. It is feelings, beliefs, convictions, attitudes and understandings of the person who is behaving that constitutes the directing forces of behavior. If a child, for instance, *thinks* or *feels* his teacher is unfair, he behaves as though she were. It doesn't seem to make any difference in the child's behavior whether the teacher is *really* unfair or not! Whether the teacher is actually unfair or not is, as the lawyer would put it, "irrelevant and immaterial information" as far as that child is concerned. To understand behavior we need to understand the personal meanings that exist for the person who is behaving. To effect changes in behavior that are lasting and more effective and efficient than before means that we must somehow effect change in an individual's personal meanings. This is the central issue in learning.

If it is true that behavior is a function of how things seem to people, then in education that is to be effective we must deal with people's meanings—not just fact and information that is coldly objective. As educators we have done well in gathering information, organizing and systematizing it, and making it readily available to people. Where we have not done so well is in helping people to discover the meaning of this information in such a way that they will behave differently as a result of the learning process. There is a great deal of difference between knowing and behaving. Most of us know a great deal better than we behave; we know better English than we speak; we know we shouldn't eat so much, smoke so much, drink so much, but we still continue to behave in some of these ways. When people misbehave it is seldom because they do not know what they should do. A study I was involved in at the University of Florida seemed to indicate that both "good" teachers and "poor" teachers would describe the ideal teaching relationship in the same ways. Both groups knew what teaching *ought* to be like—but, obviously, only one of these groups had very much success in doing or being that way! We are often like the old farmer who said when they asked him why he wasn't using modern farming methods, "Heck, I ain't farmin' now half as well as I know how!"

Modern psychology tells us that it is only when knowledge becomes meaningful to people that behavior is affected in any lasting way. If it is meanings that affect human behavior then it is meanings with which we educators must deal as we attempt to help people learn. We will need to be concerned with a different kind of facts—or perhaps expand some of our conceptions about what the real facts of human behavior are. We will have to deal with convictions, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, ideas, concepts, opinions and understandings. We have sometimes failed to understand this and many people have concluded that what goes on in school is one thing, but life is something else. We have too often said, "Sammie, don't tell me what you think about it, what are the facts of the matter?"

Since personal meanings lie inside people, they are not open to direct change and manipulation. This statement is at once obvious when we

examine closely two "commonsense" theories about learning that are currently still used most heavily by many teachers in the public schools: a) *Practice* "makes perfect," and b) *Reward* and *punishment* (reinforcement). These conventional standbys in teaching are far from reliable as methods in learning precisely because they serve at best to only manipulate behavior and do not approach the problem of meanings within people and how they are affected by them. Practice does not insure perfection. In some cases repetition leads to learning; in others it simply leads to inattention. What is rewarding to one person may be punishment for another, a fact well known to most families that have only one TV set. A long time ago a man named Dunlap demonstrated that one way to *break* habits was to practice them! He cured typists of making errors by requiring them to practice the error. He cured children of thumb-sucking by requiring them to suck their thumbs. Many people, I believe, have been cured of piano playing, arithmetic and spelling in the same way! Some pupils work hard for marks, honors and awards; others try hard to avoid them. It appears that when direct behavioral modification is obtained, the crucial question of learning still remains, "Has there been the discovery of personal meaning that will serve to make behavior permanently more effective and efficient and is the change in terms of the purposes that were sought?"

### *What Do We Say When We Use the Term "Personal Meaning?"*

Any event, fact or information acquires meaning for an individual when he perceives it as having some relationship to self. The more closely related to myself I see information I am exposed to, the more it affects my behavior. Simply knowing the definition of "angina pectoris" for example, would affect me very little and not for very long—like thousands of bits of information most of us once "learned" in school that are long since forgotten. However, if a student I knew suffered from this heart condition, I would be somewhat more affected by information about it. Finding that my father-in-law had angina pectoris would have even more effect on me because of his relationship to my self, and finding that *I* had this condition would be likely to have very drastic effects upon my entire life! In a very real sense learning can be defined as the discovery of one's personal relationship to ideas, events, concepts and the like. Notice the term "discovery" was used. This is important because we also know that the more and more *personal* information is to an individual the less and less there is that someone else can tell him about it. If you ask me, for example, "What do psychologists say about temper tantrums?", then perhaps I can *tell* you a few theories and research findings. But if you ask me, "What do you think about *my* child's tantrums and what causes them?", then I probably cannot answer that. I can only say that I might be able to work with you and the child to attempt to explore and discover possible causes. This simple idea is extremely important in considering what kinds of procedures are most likely to facilitate learning as change in personal meanings.

### *The Creation of an Atmosphere for Learning*

To aid students in actively engaging in the exploration and discovery of meaning requires an atmosphere that is conducive to such purposes. Atmospheres are not accidental; they are created out of the interaction of people with one another. The fact that a teacher is unaware of or doesn't care about the climate he creates with his students does not change the fact that they do evolve and affect the learning process. The factors controlling learning still operate whether we take cognizance of them or not. Psychology has supplied us with some cues to what the atmosphere for meaningful learning should be.

1. *Freedom from threat.* People can learn under threat, but the effect of threat is to narrow perception to that which threatens and to force people to be defensive of self. These effects of threat seem directly the opposite of what is important to learning. We do not seek to narrow a person's perspective; rather to broaden and open people to diverse evidence and understanding. We do not want to encourage self defense; we want to facilitate change of self.

2. *Challenge.* The elimination of threat from the learning situation does not mean that teachers must coddle or shield their students, or shower them with blanket praises. Quite the contrary, a feeling of success is only possible after a person has stretched himself—after he has had success after difficulty. The genius of teaching lies in the ability to challenge students without threatening them. It lies in the ability to provide experiences that require "something extra" without undue fear of making mistakes.

3. *Acceptance.* Some people have confused this work with resignation or agreement and have assumed that an accepting atmosphere is one in which students are allowed to follow whatever whims meet their fancy. Some have only endeavored to please their students. Acceptance, as it is used by psychologists, describes an attitude of willingness to look at and consider what is. It has to do with the admission of data into consideration. A willingness to confront does not imply weakness and passivity. Acceptance is understanding without judging, an attitude of taking people *as they are* and moving forward from this point. The exploration of personal meaning is not possible unless people are allowed to confront and express what they currently feel, believe, or understand.

4. *Limits.* A stable structure has important positive values in providing expectancies against which to judge one's behavior. Clear and reason-

able limits provide important security values for fostering open exploration. Some educators have been so impressed with the undesirable effects of threatened coercion that they have encouraged classrooms to be much more permissive. Unhappily, some teachers have gone so far as to act as though *any* limits were coercive. The problem is not one of completely eliminating limits but of establishing limits which are genuine, fair, reasonable, and that "fit" the people and situations involved. Limits can be designed that are related to, and conducive to, the exploration and discovery of meaning.

### *The Provision of Experiences and Information*

There must also be the provision of experiences and information for the learner if he is to be allowed to explore and discover meanings. This seems to be one of the phases of the learning process that teachers have been best able to deal with. We have gathered much information and imparted it to students for many years. Unfortunately, however, material or experiences forced upon students without consideration of their needs of the present time is easily ignored or mechanically dealt with to be soon forgotten. If we wish a child to like spinach, for example, we would not be likely to be successful in his aim by forcing him to eat it when he wasn't hungry. We would want to give him the opportunity to eat it when he was practically starved! If we are wise we offer something when it will satisfy immediate needs and be likely to acquire the meaning we wish it to have. We would not force it upon a person under circumstances which humiliate or disgust him.

Some teachers attempt to create a "need to know" through the use of artificial motives like grades, praise, punishment, etc. We have discussed earlier some of the ineffectiveness of these kinds of devices for the learning process. Exploration and discovery of personal meaning seems to be much more effectively achieved through the student's own interactions (investments of self) with teachers, fellow students and the subject matter itself. The most effective way to create new needs to know seems to be by providing problems relating to present need satisfaction which *require* a) perception of the problem, b) the formulation of ways of dealing with it, c) trying one of these "ways," d) feedback on the results, e) another perception of the problem, and etc., etc. This continual structuring and restructuring of our perceptions *is* the process of exploration and discovery with content.

One other complication in this exploration process is the teacher who knows the beautiful order and logic in his discipline and has a tough time allowing more naive students to struggle haphazardly in exploration. The teacher has discovered the logic and organization of the field as a result of his own experience which probably involved a similar highly personal search for understanding. Already "seeing" this, however, sometimes makes it difficult to allow and encourage the student's personal search. Although there certainly may be a logic of the discipline, learning is a *psycho*-logical not a strictly logical process. People develop meanings on their own terms rather than on someone else's.

### *Insuring Exploration and Discovery of Meaning*

The provision of experiences and information in an atmosphere conducive to exploration is not enough to insure that it will occur effectively. Students must be actively encouraged to explore and ample opportunities must be provided for these endeavors. The particular techniques that are useful for teachers in this regard are a highly individual matter. Each teacher finds his own best ways of operating as an expression of his own personality, goals, values, experiences and the situation in which he operates. Despite this highly individual character of techniques some general procedures do seem to be important and are suggested by modern psychological theory and research.

1. *Interaction.* The organization and reorganization of meanings is an active process best accomplished through some form of interaction of people with problems. Such interaction takes time. It may be slow and halting. It may come in spurts. It does not typically occur with people who are harried and hurried to cover the material.

2. *Active listening.* Exploratory interaction can be fostered by the teacher who attempts to listen intently to what the students are expressing and attempts at the same time to understand the meanings *as they must be from the other person's point of view!* Real listening is all too rare. It involves an active striving to understand the meaning that another is attempting to express.

3. *Expression of feelings and beliefs.* Understanding what a student seeks to express is not enough. Students need help in this process. Past experience has led them to protect themselves against the revelation of personal meanings. Most people in schools have been taught not to talk about feeling beliefs, and attitudes but to talk of what the teacher says, the book says or the "facts." Many have been hurt when they exposed their convictions to others. Yet, the essence of learning seems to lie in the exploration of not only cold, objective facts but also loves, hates, opinions, doubts, fears, questions, concerns and emotions. Students do this more readily when teachers demonstrate their own willingness and openness in doing so. Teachers must endeavor to foster such open, "gut level" communication if they are to succeed in facilitating changes in personal meaning. Such opportunity for exploration must be made a bonafide part of the curriculum in any field. The production of people who are maximally effective and efficient in their behavior demands it.

MARTIN ESSEX
*State Superintendent of Public Instruction*

# SEEING EVERY YOUNGSTER to INITIAL EMPLOYMENT

*Martin Essex*

Ours is a fortunate profession to be so needed. Americans are recognizing education and educators in a different light. They are looking on you as needed people, and, as a result, there is more respect than we have ever attained. You are frontiersmen in the vast crucial challenge in modern America—effective education for the disadvantaged. No one has charted the course, no one can give you an outline, no one can tell you the answers. You can't turn to the back of the book and neither can you read it all the way through to find the answers. Thus, I hope you appreciate the spirit of adventure, the frontier character of this operation. If you don't approach it in that spirit, I could not conceive of its being very enjoyable or very successful.

American education has been a most phenomenal development in the history of man. It's the one essential ingredient that we have in this nation that has distinguished us from Western Europe. I should hope during those occasions when you become discouraged that you would look again into our heritage, remembering the uniqueness of our concept of education. Western Europe had private enterprise, civil liberties, religious freedom and representative government. But, they shut off education at a certain point and didn't make it available to all. Here is where we moved out in front of the rest of the world. As you engage in these new responsibilities, I should hope that you would remember that we are in a fourth great development in American education--a veritable revolution in learning.

You know of the Horace Mann period of 135 years ago when he conceived the idea that every child should have an opportunity for a grammar school education. This was a drastic thought in the history of man; it served us unusually well, particularly here in the middle west where we seized on it with great vigor. Then, you know of the high school development—the Kalamazoo decision which made it legal. This thrust us out in front of the rest of the world to make us the most affluent nation in all history. Then you know of the G. I. Bill. Many of you are the beneficiaries of it and now you are bringing your greater contribution to the nation. We are down to that fourth stage. Shall we make it possible for that 20% of our fellow Americans who have not been able to succeed in our schools to attain a sense of self dignity and share in the American dream? This is your challenge.

Can we design a successful plan of education for one out of five of our fellow Americans in those lower learning ranges—the 75 to 90 IQ, roughly? Largely crowded in the bowels of our large cities, these youngsters are hostile and bitter as they riot and burn. Can we design the education to get them a part of the American dream?

I'm pleased with the legislative attitude at this time. There is interest in the proposal by which ADC children would be counted for additional funding from the state. And if such were to take place, this would be showing Ohio's big heart in supporting compensatory education. I think this movement should add to your encouragement this evening.

The nation is concerned with a new concept of occupational and vocational education. I have the humbling privilege of directing a staff study to develop a new jobs education approach for our country. Job skills are essential, but I continue to remind my advisory committee that employability can't be attained without basic education. Thus, I continue to talk about an ad-

justed curriculum for that 13 year old so he can do third grade work or that 17 year old so he can do fifth grade work. Don't leave him at the post. I continue to talk about early job opportunities so he can get some feel of the potential of money in his pocket, a sense of respect. We must think in terms of drastic changes toward early work experiences. This is something that many of us had as youngsters; now many young people can go all the way through college, or into adulthood, without the experience of holding a job. Such is particularly true in the inner city.

As you people know so very well, the deprived youngster doesn't see private employment; rather he sees a relief check. He sees the prostitute. He sees the numbers writer—he sees that numbers writer in the most expensive tailored suit that comes into his community; he sees him driving the flashiest car of an opulent part of our culture; he knows how he gets his money. When he goes over to the school and dear old Bess from the middle class culture starts talking to him about the American heritage, its ideals of honesty and integrity—hard work and its rewards—he says, "Gee, what happened to her? Doesn't she know what the world is about? She got lost back there somewhere, because this isn't what he sees. Thus, the American school has not had the motivational force for him that it had for you and me. We could see our hope and our place in the American dream. Somehow we must get that youngster out of the welfare world and get him a part-time job while still in school. Here he can see private employment—hopefully when he is not more than 13 or 14 years old and before adverse attitudes have been formed toward his country. An adjusted curriculum will be needed also.

These are the dimensions that we must work toward in our time. We must take on the job in the schools of seeing every youngster through to his initial entry into employment. Ten years ago it would have sounded radical to discuss such a responsibility. But, as you look at the scene you dare not take him out there and drop him off into the welfare cycle. You need to give him that adjusted curriculum, part-time work experience, and the other arrangements until you see him into that first job. This may take many more resources than we have been accustomed to placing in the hands of the school; I'm not looking for more responsibilities for the American school. However, I know no agency that can commence to do this job as well as the American school. If we can direct all of the federal funding toward such an objective and bring our local and state funding to a similar purpose and place it in the hands of those in the schools who are the best equipped to do the job, I have a strong feeling that when this youngster knows that the school is going to see him through to that job and that there is a chunk of the American dream out there for him, school will shine with a greater luster. You're going to see a different kind of youngster than we have seen in the past with his blunted and blurred view of the land of the free and the home of the brave.

You, in my opinion, are the indispensable frontiersmen. From another language we get a couple of words—*noblesse oblige*—meaning nobility must serve or nobility serves. You are the recipients of American opportunity and now you are returning that nobility that is yours to oblige others. There is no more noble responsibility that we can conceive in our time.

I am very pleased the Federal Relations Division has arranged this conference. I am certain emanating from here will be a better opportunity for literally thousands of Ohio youngsters who need an improved opportunity for our new wondrous, if complex, world.

# TITLE I: The NATIONAL SCENE

*Dr. Michael W. Kirst*

The National Advisory Council on the Education of Disadvantaged Children, an impartial review body, is charged by PL 89-10 with reviewing the administration and effectiveness of Federal programs for education of disadvantaged children. In order to carry out this mission the Council has employed about twenty-five consultants to observe a sample of Title I programs during this past summer and the current school year. The school districts visited are located in counties that account for almost one-third of the $1.07 billion appropriated for Title I this year. The consultant observers went in teams including a university member and outstanding local teachers and administrators. The Council cannot help but admit difficulty in judging how to measure experience under Title I by such simplistic terms as success or failure. The Council has received reports of outstanding programs from every section of the nation. Some of the characteristics which distinguish programs that favorably impressed consultants from those that appeared poor are:

1) Promising projects direct the Federal money to the disadvantaged child's specific needs—not the deficiencies of the school system. Unless we focus on the disadvantaged child, habit and ease may lead to diverting funds to more conventional objectives. The Council is convinced, therefore, that the efforts of Title I should not be merged with general aid for schools. The most successful Title I programs we have observed use a diagnostic approach to the problems of each child and are comprehensive in nature.

2) The rapport between the teacher and child

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is the most frequently observed difference between noteworthy and unimpressive programs. This rapport is probably a function of flexible curriculum and the teacher attitude that the child can learn. Within a school system the building principal can make a substantial difference in the quality of the relationship and attitude of the teacher toward the disadvantaged child. Indeed the principal who sets the tone and standards of the school can create an atmosphere that encourages initiative and creative thinking. Continuity is the key – that spark of learning and teacher-child rapport must be sustained for several years.

3) Promising programs have revamped the previous curriculum–instead of merely adding remedial drill to essentially the same material the child had difficulty grasping before Title I. Not many Title I programs include broad-based curriculum change: more common is a special remedial class using a smaller pupil-teacher ratio and some new materials.

On the other hand, the following problems have hindered the effectiveness of Title I.

1) The timing of the first two appropriations and the short-term authorization of the Act has resulted in widespread uncertainty among educators and consequent lack of planning. In some cases the delays in appropriations have impeded the integration of Title I programs into the regular school curriculum and program. The Council has recommended in each of its reports that Congress appropriate money considerably in advance of the school year. This uncertainty and tardiness with respect to funds has hindered efforts to obtain top quality personnel.

2) The aggregate of local efforts do not yet reflect a widely accepted strategy for creating a new more effective educational climate for disadvantaged children. Unfortunately, we are still at the trial and error stage of solving a complex problem. Our observations reveal that there is no widespread consensus on what program components are essential – everybody is trying something different and nobody seems sure what is effective.

3) Summer projects were for the most part piecemeal fragmented efforts at remediation or vaguely directed enrichment. Our observations of summer and winter programs reveal that it is rare to find strategically planned comprehensive programs for change based on four essential needs: adapting academic content to the special problems of disadvantaged children, improved inservice training of teachers, attention to nutrition and other health needs, and involvement of parents and community agencies in school programs. *The needs most frequently overlooked are those concerning inservice training of personnel and parent involvement.* The Council is especially concerned at the lack of program components to retrain teachers and administrators to work with disadvantaged children. Teachers are at the cutting edge where the crucial contact is made with the child. If this contact is wrong the whole program is lost.

4) Concentrating special attention upon the disadvantaged, many of whom are Negroes, could have the effect of encouraging the maintenance of the deleterious educational effects of segregation. Special education services should be designed to follow the disadvantaged child who is participating in a school desegregation program. Educators must beware of grouping practices that segregate disadvantaged children by race or economic class in order to offer them special Title I programs.

5) The Council's reports have reflected their en-

dorsement of the physics concept of critical mass. If you get enough materials of the right sort together, you have an atomic explosion. But if you have just a small bit of fissionable materials together, you will not get anything. You must exceed the critical mass of fissionable substance to get the big bang.

The "critical mass" provided by most Title I programs is not impressive. The national per pupil additional expenditure for Title I is $119 —which added to the base national average per pupil expenditure yields $651 in total. This should be contrasted to Headstart's $1,000 per pupil. This critical mass theory presents the school official with a great dilemma—to restrict the program to a relatively few children and ignore large numbers who need Title I desperately or to try to reach most disadvantaged children with some services and consequently cause less political opposition.

In sum, our observations of a national sample of Title I indicate that the Act has been successful in causing teachers and administrators to focus their thinking on ways to overcome educational deprivation. We have seen some outstanding programs which promise real increases in educational attainment. On the other hand, most Title I programs have not embodied the principal of critical mass and have overlooked parent involvement and the need to better equip our teachers to educate the disadvantaged child.

There is no doubt that Title I has significantly increased the amount of small group or individual instruction and the quality of health and food services. It remains to be seen whether this will be enough to overcome the scars of racial discrimination, the feeling of hopelessness and powerlessness rampant in our ghettoes, and the family disorganization of many of our poor people. The prospects for more systematic evaluation in the next few years should enable someone to give a more conclusive speech on the national scene and Title I.

DR. RUTH LANDES
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# TEACHERS' HANDICAPS in WORKING with MINORITY CHILDREN

*Dr. Ruth Landes*

We are in the midst of all kinds of revolution: violent, religious, scientific, sexual, political, centered in the five continent world of Revolution. Our right to be here and our responsibility for the profession and to society are that we are paid officers and specialists of the schooling Establishment. We are proud of the status and quite early turn rather smug over it.

Confined to our rooms, acting by routines, we do not usually govern the Establishment. We are its servants. The more uncritically we perform, the likelier we are, as individuals, to remain on comfortable payrolls, financed by the richest economy in man's history. In our wealthy economy, as in the Republic of South Africa, even the poor live better than ever, whether in ghettos or fenced behind bars. Compare our accepted U.S. poverty-line drawn at $3,000, or $3,500 of annual family income with the no incomes of India's poor, or of black Africa's.

However, our great wealth obscures the great social drives beating at established arrangements; and we tend to believe that disturbances can be resolved by funding bureaucratic programs (such as the anti-poverty ones) and by coining new slogans (such as "The Poor," "The Culturally Disadvantaged"). In our unstable time, it is misleading to concentrate on technicalities of school instruction, whatever the level, before visualizing the social universe we serve, which has created us, which defies us, and which beats us into its line.

What does it mean in our community, and in the education we supply, that we are creatures of the Establishment? Our funds come overwhelmingly from public sources; their allocation and administration are determined at political seats of power. Establishment structures

and functions seem inevitable for coordinating our vastly populous America, urban, industrial. universally enfranchised, committed to universal schooling of individuals until advanced ages.

A mighty establishment means entrenched authority, with aspects of remoteness and inevitable brutality. Go into any neighborhood of minorities to hear and see the confirmations. Read some of today's best-selling, hate-filled protest fiction James Baldwin and LeRoi Jones, for example. who speak for Negroes. In 1915, an American Indian physician, Dr. Charles Eastman, expressed the same bitterness (although genteelly) in his autobiography. We are used to hearing from and about Negroes, because they have been linked to one of the original Establishments, the slave-owning plutocracy, always politically astute in the old South.

We are not used to hearing directly from some minorities. When we learn about them from educated spokesmen, who are inseparable from a prevailing Establishment, bitter truths get romanticized by the teller's talent—as in John Steinbeck's quaint tales of California Mexicans and even in his absorbing novel about poor whites, *Grapes of Wrath*. They entertain by the distance and sanitation of the printed page—as in Oscar Lewis' *La Vida*, about Puerto Ricans —and by catchy phrases such as Jacob Riis' (1849-1914) *How the Other Half Lives*, and Robert E. Park's "the marginal man," and Sir Charles Snow's "the two cultures." This last, in part, was derived from Oscar Lewis' "the culture of poverty" and perhaps Frank Riessman's "the culturally deprived." So human torture ends as outsiders' polite literature.

Now our government joins the poverty round to far corners of our land with its catch-phrases and bureaucracies, such as "Alliance for Progress" in so-called "underdeveloped countries," "anti-poverty programs" "Job Corps" Centers, VISTA activities, and a myriad more to administer population and fiscal controls and others. It seems idealistic to us who do not need it.

Responses of the disadvantaged beneficiaries are often something else. They break through as community and courtroom scandals reported in newspapers, and as shocking incidents to respectable observers on the spot. The shock often lies in the ingratitude of the poor, such as those called "Corpsmen" by one government euphemism. In passing, note that non-white racial indicators and epithets are forbidden, though such beneficiaries' four-letter words and other substandard uses are not. Certain substandard coinages are compiled in a publication for anti-poverty educators' use. Further shock to Establishment innocence lies in the misbehavior of these poor, through drinking, sex, violence, surliness, and other social unkemptness.

Except for ex-members of the foreign-based Peace Corps, young folk who often functioned alone in strange lands that belonged culturally and politically to the host-beneficiaries (e.g., Africa, Brazil), the well-intentioned educators of domestic anti-poverty programs often fail to project themselves imaginatively into the status positions of the poor, the social histories and the individual psyches of their pupils, of their pupils' families, and of their pupils' concepts of social spheres or events.

This is nobody's fault, for such failure belongs to middle-class power and safety. Unless you have risen individually into the middle-class from a recent minority status, or are an Establishment odd-ball, or evading the draft, or possibly a woman frustrated by barriers of that status, certain reactions of the poor led into anti-poverty's education programs will shock, disillusion, disappoint and hurt. I mean behavior like disrespect, verbal abuse, indifference, hate. Nor are these bad if authorities use the experiences to amplify programmed knowledge, insights and planning. But we hear that they do not. This point affects the international programs, as when the Spanish-speaking Americans snicker at our foreign-aid title "Alianza para Progresso". In Spanish, the "para" is the third person present indicative of the verb "to stop," as well as the infinitive meaning "for." So that great slogan, "Alliance for Progress," becomes ridiculed throughout the twenty countries south of the border as "Alliance Halts Progress," because they must accept the aid.

What do I mean by education in the present discussion, thinking as an anthropologist about mankind? I do not focus on only curricula of study, only measures of school achievements, or only teacher training. I examine all processes of survival by societies. All human groups who exist now have been selected by evolutionary processes, as expressed through biology and through society. Biological selection operates through genetic materials, societal selection operates through cultural ones, in views presented by behavioral scientists that include great biologists like Sir Julian Huxley and Dr. Theodosius Dobzhansky, besides scholars from socio-cultural disciplines. In their perspective, no physical types of men are primitive or inferior but their societies vary enormously. Societies are constructs that rest much on historical accident. It seems possible to grade a people's technological skills by efficiency, but not many other aspects of social existence. From this standpoint, we can label groups as having primitive or advanced technologies but we cannot label them scientifically as having primitive men. Indeed the published discussions of Charles Russell Wallace with Darwin in the last century, after *Origin of Species* had appeared, made the point, not answered by Darwinian evolutionary theory, that Amazon River Indian groups, whom Wallace knew intimately, showed far more intellectual potential than they needed to survive in their tribal world. That is, he found the culture primitive, but not the people.

What does this suggest for education? It implies that men learn whatever they must learn for their social lives. What they learn and how they learn rest heavily on opportunity, pressuring one way or another. Opportunity always means arrangements with other people, organized by tradition, inescapably. No men have lived and survived apart from society.

Society is the grouping of a population by classes trained to function upon instructions, evolved through long tradition, or civilization. The generic term for these social ways is "culture"; it means the life-medium, as it does in biological or biochemical experiments. But it stresses the life-medium of mind, of human genius. Huxley and other leaders view human culture, in Huxley's words (*Evolution in Action*, 1957, p. 13), as the "human phase of evolution." He suggests that the physical phase of evolution has gone its limit. Culture is the stockpiling of traditional inventions and now affects biology. Dobzhansky describes man's ability to transmit culture, derived from forbearers and developed by contemporaries, as "a new, non-biological heredity. . ." (*The Biological Bases of Human Freedom*, 1956, p. 80).

This comprehensive transmission, by teaching and learning, is education. The teaching occurs from the moment of birth; Freud pondered also the instructions to new life still in the womb, participating in all the mother's deepest responses. Freud showed that teaching occurs at conscious and unconscious levels of individual personality and even of society. Psychiatry, psychoanalysis, psychology and cultural anthropology believe that the profoundest learning occurs at unconscious levels. Not that the "unconscious" has been localized. We know it is strongly linked to the emotional life of individuals. Carl Jung's theoretical and therapeutic systems of psychiatry employed the evidence and materials of mythology, folk rituals, and other ancient traditional symbols; these constitute, Jung said, "the racial unconscious."

These points are made by great discoverers of man's conduct not to slight the rational, conscious, aware aspects of behavior but to show (1) that it does not constitute all the behavior of an individual or of a group; and (2) that it is influenced to incalculable extents by other realms of behavior, partly because the other realms are vague, and partly because they are not reckoned with. It is assumed that the immense power of demagogues—a McCarthy, a Hitler or Mussolini, an Evita Peron—lies in intuitive appeals to unconscious terrors, in intuitive skills at exploiting unconscious fears. To call such leaders talented or charismatic simply obscures understanding with a word.

Words are a prime avenue of deception, but our formal schooling leans heavily upon them, or think it does when it rates by literacy. Any parent, political leader, clergyman, lawyer, or actor, any advertising man, poet, or lecturer knows that words alone never carry the whole message. They may not even carry the message they say they do. Meaning is conveyed by the context, which is social, emotional and allusive. Harry Stack Sullivan, the great psychiatrist who gave us the concept of "interpersonal relations," made it clear that each person carries a social universe around in his own head. Even if locked in a dark closet, actually or figuratively, a person "interacts" as he has learned to do officially and/or been conditioned to do emotionally and habitually. And he interprets stimuli accordingly, but may learn to qualify interpretations by rational checks. Words are building blocks, never raw, self-contained, or unedited when they hit the human ear. They hold exactly such additions that they do for the pet dog whose master has trained it—plus incomparably more that comes from the flux of social existence.

For instance, the word "trip." Last winter in a small seminar on personality and culture, a student remarked that her boy-friend had "taken a trip." Having learned to swallow and count over and over to ten during decades of anthropological field work among all kinds of groups, I did so now until my conventional brain dredged up the association with the LSD cult and its high priest. To show that I followed her, I mentioned Thomas de Quincey's *Confessions of an Opium Eater*. But the young students had never heard of this English essayist, nor had he ever called his habit a "trip." I asked myself why the understatement, what unconscious message it held, why the light touch, really denied by the intense conduct of the cult. The understated vocable, and its drenching in feelings about the LSD experience, are carefully taught to each participant and bystander. They are not taught simply by words. They are taught by larger actions, of the people who meet in groups, selecting certain kinds of personalities to do so, attending to reports of happenings, the quasi-martyrdom of the leader, his costumery, the cult's linkage with protest against an ugly society. I saw that the protest, the withdrawal by drug, the word "trip" constituted a meaning of escape.

This is exactly how people learn everything else: reading, writing, arithmetic, love, hate, defiance of God, the Vietnam draft, and the social arrangements labeled as race discrimination, poverty, cultural handicap. We never learn simply, but through layers of response, individual, social, rational, emotional.

Our conference here is concerned immediately with the education offered by schools, especially at primary and secondary levels. Still, it is impossible to restrict our outlook to schools because attendance at schools is obliged by law, until age sixteen or seventeen, and this is enforced by the police power and the courts, the whole financed from the public treasury, administered by officers representing the general public interests. The international aspect hit everyone less than ten years ago when Russia's Sputnik made some fear for our children's future and very survival in the spiraling competition. Russia's competition does work. It has goaded us to drop race bars in society, and to put everyone through schools, even if merely to sit until their middle teens.

Not until I was asked by California institutions in 1959 to train teachers and social workers to cope with children and families of the newly clamorous minorities—particularly Negroes and the Spanish-speaking—did I realize: (1) that educators themselves came often of minority origins; and (2) that many minority children and their families rejected the schooling—some through hate, some through fear, some through a sense of hopeless entrapment by Establishment

prejudice and their own poverty. Some children sought by educators for enrichment programs would drop out. I heard numerous teachers lay this to "racial" inadequacy. They joined others in complaining about "frustration." Of course they were frustrated—this was the deep revenge of their minority pupils.

Only the occasional educator talked to resistant pupils or parents to learn why. These educators were astounded to discover that such pupils did not want to be separated by school schemes from their less-enriched family and friends. The school had not convinced them that further compliance beyond the law was worthwhile. Few are such extreme loners as James Meredith. Do we hear of another today even among Negroes? Not all groups can hate as constructively as the Black Muslims nor organize as powerfully as Dr. King's Southern Conference, or the NAACP.

Schools are institutions with deeply vested interests; hence they must lag in our rapidly moving, revolutionary times. While education operates in all social avenues, many basic techniques and many goals of urban industrial society are taught in schools. They are also taught by TV, the radio, newspapers, girlie magazines, neighborhood gangs, and the police.

In my childhood, public schooling was simpler for the authorities, even in my native New York City fifty years ago. There were truant officers, and arrangements for speeding ahead the bright ones. Children attending school were those whose parents obliged them to, generally speaking. The school populations I knew were preeminently middle-class, from first grade through university. Many teachers were not quite of that middle class themselves, and I recall that we rather looked down on them. But we children knew we had to obey the office they held. And they respected our parents. The atmosphere then was uniform and unchallenged. It may have been the last gasp of the middle-class rider in his saddle. We children were bored, as children are now, but we knew where we stood, how we were oriented. For instance, we believed that personal merit brought recognition. No one is so innocent now.

The schooling world is still middle-class, in both formal statements and commitments. However, "middle-class" does not mean quite the same as before. Like the past, it contains those who are rated "successful" in earnings and in professional competence. But it differs in that members are recruited increasingly from the whole spectrum of minorities. (I use "minority" to mean groups of little political power and large subcultural heritages).

This means that minority individuals, going through the college and professional mills, emerge middle-class in outer WASP image, yet daily must fight in themselves the old battle of prejudice for they have learned the part of both bigot and victim. I know this from the family culture autobiographies my students write in the U.S. and in Canada; some of these appear in my 1965 book on *Education*. Each one's private fight gets projected into teachers' conduct, reported by fellow teachers and by pupils.

There is no across-the-board interest in minorities: e.g. American Indians and Eskimos are ignored, except on TV, as if they never were, while their racial cousins, the Japanese and Chinese, spur attention almost as readily as do European Jews. Negroes are a special American obsession, but overtones differ greatly on both coasts, and again in Texas. Mexican-Americans are known to the Southwest rather as Negroes are known to the old South, but with special nuances.

I roam like this to suggest some of the unpredictability of middle-class values and concerns to which we educators are committed; by these standards we measure both ourselves and our students. The middle-class loves order. Until lately its authority gave the illusion that all community conduct, specifically mass schooling, was orderly. Such departures as massive drop-outs, abuse of teachers in "blackboard jungles," pupil rates of pregnancy, drug-addiction, absenteeism, and gang-violence still do not upset the official protected premise of a uniform situation under control. We retain old middle-class goals, and pile on techniques to bring them alive, such as how to read and how to read faster, how to achieve better school grades.

The nonofficial meanings of exchanges between teacher and alienated pupil, and between teacher and pupil's family, are explored only by occasional educators. When this happens, and the teacher adjusts goals and techniques to fresher realizations of pupils' expectations and needs, tremendous strides occur almost overnight, as I saw in southern California. The old proverb still applies in our automated time: "You can lead a horse to water but you can't force him to drink." You must in fact make him want to drink; and this presupposes a study of his habits.

Each minority has its own ways of being human or divine, its own traditions, painfully experienced, preserved, passed on. Poverty is only one aspect. It is obvious that to be a Negro and to know all about Negroes tells nothing about being a Jew, even when both are poor. Nor do members of these minority groups therefore spontaneously comprehend the social traits, i.e., the thinking of a Navajo or any other American Indian, or of Orientals, or of Latin-Americans. Even when all speak English, the words, idioms, silences, gestures, and pairings-off can mean quite unrelated matters. To some degree, similiar disparities hold for men and women even of the same social class or tradition, because each sex is trained to carry out some dissimilar, although complementary, functions. It is possible that hippies may change this; certainly the suffragettes did not.

One trait all groups share is the need for respect. No man survives well in his society's service by despising himself—yet this is what minorities are pressured and trained to do, in part, by prevailing prejudices concerning race, religion, national origin, and sex. A Spaniard once mentioned, "Beware of a humble man—he'll get you from behind." Minorities trained to despise

themselves have always rebelled covertly, including the schoolchildren whose so-called "apathy" and "under-achievement" and whose parents' so-called "lack of cooperation" defeat armies of educators crying "frustration."

When we got this clue in the California program and acted upon its logical implications, improvements were dramatic and occurred overnight. The over-all formula was for schools to adopt conduct, even language, that pupils and parents understood, and then to follow through without compromising standards of teaching and learning. One remarkable aspect, which cut with a double edge, was that when the pupil moved on to another teacher untrained in the new adaptation, the pupil relapsed into former habits that led the teacher to cry "frustration" and to despise himself a little, professionally. On the other hand, we found that children of parents who had been through the school system were more tractable than children of immigrant minorities who feared the school as they did the police patrol.

This illustrated spontaneously how the minority is an arm of formal schooling although its part is not properly recognized and seldom esteemed. When ignored for its worth by the school, the low-status family, acting upon information from its pupil-representative in class, may sabotage the system, wasting skills and finances of teachers, counselors, truant officers, nurses, doctors. The educator is always vulnerable because he does not examine why he is the target, he does not recognize the hostile devices used, and he pens himself up in the fortress of his school. What the teacher then communicates to minority pupils and their kin, from whom he separates himself by physical and status distances and by cultural ignorance, are his uncertainty and even fear. This turns into a spiraling mechanism. But the obverse can also happen, though only when the educator leaves his professional fortress for the marketplace of the minorities. I recall the tenseness of a young woman teacher in my graduate research seminar. She had planned a field study carrying her into the Mexican-American household of a difficult young pupil whose father often drank and deserted his family. She was keyed up with fears, perhaps because she censured the father in her mind. I told her she need not go, but that she would learn much if she did. Among other things she would see that the man knew he was not her husband and could not desert her, and would treat her properly, if indeed he was around at all. She steeled herself and went. Next day she was starry-eyed. The woman had been so gracious, she said, meeting her at the house door with this greeting, "It's nice to have tea at home, isn't it?" Of course it was. And the boy turned docile as a lamb in class; the teacher had shown mother and son she was the family's friend.

Many individual teachers act so, of course, but it is not a common practice nor is it required, except by occasional principals and supervisors. Often when I discussed some related remarkable achievements—such as the ingenuity of a Mexican-American novice teacher in extracting original poetry from an eleventh grade remedial reading class of delinquents and minorities, where all but two pupils scored a zero rating on the Cooperative English test, a teacher would protest that there was nothing new in this. It is like saying there is nothing new in life, or genius. What I was trying to show was that adaptive teaching procedures were at hand but not cultivated in teacher-training nor in usual classroom methods. Sometimes a young teacher would tell me, "We love our students and that's everything." It is not everything, by a far cry, nor is it any more desirable in a teacher than in a medical doctor. (Bruno Bettelheim produced a book with the celebrated title *Love is Not Enough*, meaning that techniques and other knowledge are also basic. Love of your profession is one thing, and admirable. But "love" directed to pupils or to patients becomes a cruel obligation laid on them to do the loving—whatever that means. It would mean a plague of "Children's Hours.")

The March 19th issue of the New York Times reported that at Public School 125 in New York's West Harlem and at Intermediate School 201 in East Harlem, parents and community representatives, who are Negroes and Puerto Ricans, now demand a say in operating the schools, including selecting the principal, so that the school and the minority or poor community will together adapt education to real necessities. This remarkable development is surely an outcome of the New York City Board of Education's enrichment programs out in the minorities' communities, which started in the late 1950's. Avoidance of schools in poor minority areas has been usual, both parties cowering apart in mutual resentment and fear.

Another extraordinary feature of education today in New York City, as in other Northern cities, including Chicago, Philadelphia and Detroit, according to the same issue of the New York Times, is that Negroes and Puerto Ricans now comprise 50.2 per cent of all New York City pupils. Ten years ago they were only a third of the New York City's public-school population. This complicates school integration of minorities. Leonard Buder, in the same issue of the New York Times, says, "Although the Board of Education has succeeded in integrating many formerly all-white schools, there are now more predominantly Negro and Puerto Rican schools than ever before.

"With integration, let alone racial balance, becoming an increasingly elusive goal, many parents in the New York City ghetto areas have turned their attention to raising the quality of their schools. The educational disparity between predominantly Negro and predominantly white schools remains striking."

"Board of Education officials agree that parent and community representatives have a role to play but neither side has been able to decide what this should be." This uncertainty seems almost to return us to the status quo of ivory-tower schooling except that nowadays teachers are demonstrating, at least in the urban northeast, against overcrowding, inadequate staff,

and, at Junior High School 98 in the Bronx, against "disruptive pupils" (L. Buder). This school, located in a formerly white middle-class area, is now 96 per cent Puerto Rican and Negro.

Integration is usually discussed as though it concerned only parents and pupils. So far, with one exception, I have mentioned educators without explicit racial or status qualifications. This usually conveys that the speaker refers only to whites of middle-class. But this is inaccurate for educators. Even the predominantly white teachers come from various origins, not all of them middle-class. And over the country there is a sprinkling, growing denser, of the so-called "ethnic" teachers. All possess middle-class features on the surface. In fact, by the time educators pass through the college mill, all have acquired a middle-class patina, so that they all look alike, despite racial differentiations. But it is only patina. I have found to my surprise. "Scratch a Russian and you find a Tartar." Let the teacher scratch himself or herself by sociocultural examination of his family, and suddenly, there ring out his cries of anti-German prejudice, anti-Irish, anti-Mormon, and others that I had never dreamed of. Teachers in their fifties and sixties doing graduate study had retained the minorities' hurts of their parents and their own childhoods.

This would be only of individual or theoretical significance if it did not affect teaching. When the teacher belongs to a minority, or emerges from one, unsuspected hostilities as well as unsuspected sympathies and insights can be touched off in him by pupils and their parents. We ran into this very clearly in southern California with Mexican-American and Negro teachers introduced newly to teaching staffs that had decided to "integrate" one at a time a few years ago. Often behavior took the form of such an "ethnic" teacher, as they are called today, resenting "being put on the spot" with respect to pupils. This could mean that the teacher wished to avoid for himself the "Mexican" or "Negro" label—which operates as a label of inferior class that, in the reasoning of prejudice, is equated with inferior biological quality and with dubious personal value. Teachers avoiding such confrontation with their socially inherited labels often try to disclaim responsibility for the progress of pupils and families under the same label. They fear reprisals and wish to escape notice. In southern California, for example, most schools and places of employment forbade Spanish-speaking children and employees to use their native tongue even among themselves during free time; schools punished them; businesses fired them. This was still true in 1965, when I left after a ten years' residence. Educators used to tell me and other respectable inquirers, "If they talk Spanish, we don't know what they're saying. Maybe they're talking about us."

Teachers are not the stuff of revolutionaries. Their whole training presses them to conserve order, tradition, the proprieties. Still, in a friendly situation, with guidance and support, individual teachers of all origins will assume pertinent but uncharted responsibilities. Thus, some of our Mexican and Anglo teachers, concerned about education and real progress, did talk Spanish with pupils and parents if this seemed called-for. The Mexican-American teacher I have already mentioned even read Spanish poetry to her zero-rated English-comprehension class, which included Mexican-Americans, American Negroes, and poor whites; she pronounced pupils' Spanish names correctly, which astounded them as a marvelous innovation; and she elicited poetry from all in English so effectively that the poems have been discussed in several education articles, as well as in my own book and articles. She used her judgment and exercised responsibility, and she scorned the cliche handed her that her's was a class of "monsters." She secured the poems from an entire class, not from occasional individuals. Some teachers everywhere effect comparable miracles. But let us not say miracles, for they are explainable as teaching addressed to specific needs. Often the teacher is not entirely aware of the revolution he or she is perpetrating; we call that "genius." Observers can extract the principles of instruction. I tried this, and told interested teachers, who took them up and got similar results.

This particular Mexican-American teacher, like the centipede, needed no coaching, especially about assuming responsibility for pupils of any origins. But others do need coaching. I shall never forget the teacher who, after weeks and weeks of seminars which she attended in a silence that seemed hostile, suddenly came to me aglow, to report on her project. "I went out to their houses," she said, "because the flash-floods kept them home. And I talked Spanish! They loved it! And they said they would come to school. They weren't afraid." What struck me was that she had lost fears, for the moment anyway, and so perhaps would cease transmitting fears to her pupils. A teacher who is interested and well oriented to minorities in class drops punishment and tries to mine the personalities kept captive by school law.

Only the occasional teacher does this alone. Many more can do so when supported by school policy. One graduate student of mine was a junior high school principal in California, who established machinery whereby his Mexican-American pupils taught Spanish to English-speaking classmates. This school and neighborhood were then notorious for gang warfare between Anglos and Mexicans and Negroes; the Mexicans for years had gotten a bad press, without variation, in the local paper, which was widely read. Within the school year, the principal's device worked completely and won a national award. Not only were the Mexicans now respected, and they and Negroes brought into top ranks of school government (with faculty aid, of course), but Mexican parents were approached by Anglo parents! The enormity of this change between the two steeply ranked classes of parents can be appreciated only by a Californian. Now, this principal knew exactly what he was doing. He had a profound philosophy of education which he extended into other spheres of community life. He communicated this to his teachers. And when they

took administrative posts elsewhere in California schools, they carried on. One in particular made Spanish-speaking in halls and classrooms, when pertinent, a matter of course. This was a change as radical as the last decade's rulings on desegregation.

Integration of minorities at school covers the hiring of teachers, too, but seems to be little emphasized. Business stresses its own integrative efforts more, which may reflect a difference between the ethos of big business and of universal education. Business regards itself as "risk enterprise," though often long after schedule. Education shudders at connotations of "risk."

Integration of minority teachers can be an uncertain progress. It leans considerably on the individual principal's or superintendent's hiring policy, considerably on stands taken by local civil rights organizations, especially the Negro ones, and importantly on views of existing staff. The enormously rapid turnover of teachers annually, like the residential instability of families, causing many individual children to change school several times in one school year—this teacher turnover makes for anonymity, for passing the buck of responsibility, which hinders formation of integration policy and of teachers' commitment to it. Yet this anonymity may favor a statistical integration of teachers. Only through my graduate teachers' seminar projects in California did I realize what secret questions, what threats to private security, what aspects of manners, what undirected good will, and the opposite attended teacher integration. In one high school for a rich California city it was believed that the hiring of Negroes about three years ago was qualified by the hiring officer's judgment of whether the Negro's appearance could pass for white. In one fourth-year class there, the teacher declared she was a Negro. This puzzled the students, bright teenagers, one of whom told me. The students went home and asked their parents, "Why did she say that?" They were confused and so were the parents.

But it does not require great insight to suppose that this was the teacher's way of telling everyone where they stood, by the light of integration policy. If she did not look Negro, still she was that, a touchy business that had best be clarified. I see this as a crude exercise in professional responsibility, perhaps peculiar to American Negroes who have been trained lately in public and emotional militancies by their own leaders. This is also a peculiarly American emphasis on laying all cards on the table. I recall an incident when I was appointed to President Roosevelt's Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC), being the first white person on the professional staff in 1941. The Executive Secretary, a gentleman originally from Louisiana, said in my hearing, "I admire the Negro. You can knock him down but each time he gets up and sticks out his chin for more." This sounded less patronizing in those days than it would now. But its American message is clear: a real self-respecting person stands up to fight and be counted.

But this is not quite the Latin-American way. What Spanish-speaking people stressed, in the Southwest, was and is "pride" and self-respect, as they said over and over. The offending gringos should know that they are inferior, that they conquered Mexico by deceit, that they exploit Mexicans economically, that they merit scorn. So traditionally, Mexican-Americans withdrew from many situations of crucial encounter, committing themselves to their own segregated church leaders. Individuals realized that this course did not work in America, that it was condemned as "apathy," "poor motivation," exploitability; its sentimental apotheosis appears in Steinbeck's tales of Mexicans around Salinas. Only now are the Spanish-speaking numbers facing the need to behave like Anglos in the American world.

One young school teacher revealed some traditional difficulties. She had returned to her childhood school and found that most of the children were still Mexican and spoke no English. So she realized that their parents were immigrants, and clearly very poor. Some of the children were filthy, which is not the Mexican way; it was her proper duty to notify the mothers. But she could not do so. She knew this criticism from a young unmarried woman constituted the height of disrespect. Nor did she explain this to the principal. To me she said, "I can't tell them." The principal, a very nice Irish woman, failed to understand why. Nor could she understand, she told me, why young Negro mothers, newly migrated to this California town, did not acquaint their children with "the facts of life" about race prejudice.

Well, prejudice is a fact of life. There are all kinds and locations of prejudice. It doesn't help anyone to remain ignorant of the operations. And it seems to me that educators have a prime responsibility for knowing how prejudice functions in the community-establishment, among the various minorities, poor or not, in themselves privately, and above all, in themselves professionally. The law spells out our ideal of equality, in this era, as minorities' integration under education, and in all public services. This ideal was never challenged as such even by the deep South in the first days of Roosevelt's FEPC, and now the Wallace governors also at times stammer over uttering full denial. Integration means further disintegration of the social classes that flourished before universal schooling in the United States. It will not make life easier—nor will the population explosion, the technological explosion, the aerospace explosion. Lindbergh was quoted recently as warning us to give up aerospace for it threatens our total destruction by war; and he himself is concentrating on traditional religion.

But history cannot be altered or reversed, prejudice cannot be ignored, the culture that we have absorbed cannot be removed. It can be employed in fresh ways, however—as are all cultures that survive.

An emphasis I always followed with teachers was that, on the job, they had to carry out the law. The law prohibits and punishes unfair dis-

crimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, and sometimes sex. Servants of the community and indoctrinators of our national tradition, teachers must obey the law on the job. This involves knowing what is happening between themselves and integrated classes, including pupils and parents. Subjective judgments are not enough. Knowledge of cultural symbols and processes, and of psychological ones, on the part of pupils, parents, and teachers themselves, is essential. This is the essence of responsibility, which we assumed in an earlier time, with a stable, fairly nonmobile, clearly class-organized, culturally more uniform population. We have company. Look across the seas now and watch the United Kingdom suddenly trapped in social upsets, triggered by an exploding so-called "colored" population, a population that a few years ago she administered at oceans' distances and by rigid class mechanisms.

A sense of responsibility, very marked in the education profession, softens without appropriate expression. It seems to me that expression demands a wide range, such as teachers simulating strong cultural norms of minorities (such as the public good manners of Latins, the greater directness of Negroes), knowing the languages used (whether a foreign-tongue like Spanish, or the English argot of ghetto groups), phrasing education goals (e.g., reading) and adapting the tools (e.g., primers) to the minorities' experiences, without sacrificing standards. These steps require cooperation of specialists in culture, law, the psychologies, and others.

Above all, the minorities and the poor are human beings, with immense reservoirs of talent and energy. Teaching success depends on clear visualization of these aspects. It is hard to kill off human abilities but they can be misdirected. In the integrated universe, at present, schooling cannot maintain the old uniform standards. Integration means social diversity. Hence education must adapt to the culturally varied human nature present in the classroom, and beneath the surface, present among the education faculties.

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# The LANGUAGE ARTS and the DISADVANTAGED CHILD

## HOW CAN WE HELP TAMMY?

*Dr. Mary Harbage*

Who is Tammy? Tammy is just one, one very unique child of the many "disadvantaged-advantaged" boys and girls I have known. I have to use both words for whether it is –

Tammy or Herbert
Ginnie or Carl
Moon Chai or Connie

or any of the others I shall mention, each faced and lived with an almost overwhelming problem or problems; yet each had some strength which, when found and built upon, opened the way for that child to become more nearly advantaged.

Quite early in my teaching career I decided that each child came bringing unknown gifts–gifts for me, gifts for himself. There have been times when I almost despaired of finding the asset in some child. Tammy was a whiner, a sniffer, a fighter, a complainer. He always needed a handkerchief and never had one. As far as academic work was concerned he was seemingly capable of nothing. The art teacher and I looked at those all too ready fists in near despair. Then one day in the studio Jo gave each student a glob of clay. After a few minutes the two teachers gathered the rest of the first graders together and all watched while a mother and a small giraffe came into being under deft and swift fingers–attached to those hostile fists. The giraffe family was glazed, fired, and with due ceremony placed on a box draped with teacher's best silk scarf in the display case near the entrance of the school. There is an almost fairy tale ending to this story. Tammy began to talk

rather than whine, play rather than fight, and what is more he learned to read.

When thinking of disadvantaged children I always remember a traditional fairy tale, "Beauty and the Beast." Too many boys and girls are like the Beast in that they are caught in ugly, forbidding prisons and can only be freed by the compassion or tears, kindness and understanding of one who loves and tries to see within.

How Can We Help Tammy?

Disadvantaged-advantaged children became my teachers, introducing me to strange and varied modes of living. While doing this they also taught me to:

Watch and observe carefully

Listen with my eyes as well as my ears

Try to see how they might feel—to walk in their shoes

Move and speak slowly, giving them that extra bit of time

Pick up a lead

Wait—and then move swiftly as the way opened up.

Carl had every material advantage. An only and over-protected child he was locked within himself in silence. For the most of two school years he did not speak. Often tears rolled down his cheeks as he longingly watched the others play.

Connie's parents and even her grandparents belonged to the jet set. The maid who came for conferences couldn't have cared less. Connie's communication skills were limited to giving orders and this mode of communication hardly appealed to her peers. I used to watch her leaving school in solitary grandeur looking longingly out the back window cut off by glass from even the chauffeur. Carl and Connie were both "disadvantaged-advantaged."

I sampled a bit of Herbert's home life when his mother, armed with a butcher knife, came to school to teach that teacher "somethin." Herbert's learning capacity for what I had to offer was pitifully low; my idea of what a teacher should do in a classroom most inadequate.

Ginny, my first key wearer, had a father who was a wanderer. Her mother worked at the bowling alley until well into the night. Ginny was bringing herself up. In getting ready for school she ignored all aspects of good grooming. Her long bedraggled hair became more matted each week. The once pretty party dress had made swift transitions from soiled, to dirty, to filthy.

Tammy was wise in the ways of a farm and the out of doors but completely unacquainted with school language, school ways, books, pencils, and papers. The first thing we did was to give Tammy a test. Never having had a pencil before he was completely carried away and marked everything in the booklet. Tammy was soon declared a retarded child. Fortunately there was some good ink eradicator close at hand, so no one ever knew.

George crawled around on the floor, hid under the tables, and once in a while he looked around a screen at the rest of us—all the time making the strangest noises.

The twins, Jerry and Jim, were looked upon as moochers, beggars, and it was even suggested that they might, on occasion, take things which weren't their own.

Eddie, almost half again larger than anyone in his class, spent three-fourths of his day standing out in the hall, looking for more trouble. A little gypsy, a true daughter of Romany, came and went with the changing seasons, taking things with her which the public schools felt belonged to them. I wonder . . .

An older example, a telephone linesman, who had no children, who laughed at the idea of ever possibly becoming a teacher, doggedly worked his way through a night class in "Literature for Children and Youth."

I call all of these disadvantaged-advantaged individuals. Later I found that, rather than just one here and another there, there are whole large groups of disadvantaged children in our schools.

With great hope a group of us planned an after-work educational program for the children of migrant families who came into northwest Arkansas, stayed long enough to pick beans, and then moved on. All of our beautifully worked out plans were set aside as we watched these boys and girls trudge or drag themselves wearily in from the fields. We set one kind of education aside for another—one more important. The kind I call "fundamental." These children learned how it felt to stand in a warm shower and get really clean; to slide into a few clean clothes, not to nap but to sleep and to wake up to the smell of a good big meal being served. There wasn't much time left for the other things we had planned, nor was there money for needed materials. We finished off our time together with a story or a song, a few games and were more than content.

It is wise to get away from a school's parking lot just before dismissal time rather than risk moving while children criss-cross around the parked cars. At 11:45 one morning I was caught and sat there watching these bedraggled waifs of this world wander away. Just then the bells in a nearby church began to play, "What A Friend We Have in Jesus." As I shook the tears from my eyes I felt sure that these ragamuffins could use an extra friend.

More of the toys, the fun things of learning, and the art and craft materials often found in middle class homes, were sent to this school; it became my haven when I was weary of an office; the place to try out ideas about learning not related to text books and tests. And when I grew tired of the futility of making speeches I took an empty class room and with the help of an A.C.E. group made it into a gay and lovely class room. Next I borrowed ten first graders, ten from the second grade, and ten from the third, and taught school. (Teachers were more than generous in letting me have them). After a time the room was opened for visitors. Once

they came they had to stay a full half day for there were things I wanted to say in action about rest and play, kindness and laughter, as well as adapting a program of reading or social studies to the needs of these children.

Nothing that I know of in this country can match the misery of the lost, homeless children found in 1952-1953 in war-torn Korea. Cho Moon Chai was a dirt-encrusted, hollow-faced nonentity. The only thing he had left was a bit of curiosity. His father had been killed and his mother lived just long enough to get him to an uncle's village. Knowing the uncle was an alcoholic, she gave a small sum of money for Moon Chai's education to the schoolmaster — and then gave up. A perceptive teacher had written of Cho, "He doesn't smile; he doesn't sing; he doesn't even talk. He is like a withered flower that is about to die."

Children can die from the lack of love. And they most need it when they are the least lovable.

It was in Korea that I learned that a great scholar may have to be unshaven and ill-kept; that stealing food cannot always be condemned; that no matter how bad a situation is, how lost a child may seem to be, there is *always* something that can be done.

After my first trip into Pusan seeing walking ghosts of children with distended bellies and spindly legs, starving in the streets, I wondered how I could go on. It was Dr. Kim who set me straight as he said, "Families need to have some reason to get up in the morning, a reason to try to get food. Having a child in school is a good one. And, there is hope for any nation whose children are going to school. So we have schools!" At that I rolled up my sleeves and started to work.

Isn't it criminal that in this wealthy country, with all of its emphasis on the training of teachers and administrators, educators at times create *disadvantaged* children and do it with consummate skill and a religious-like fervor. For—

> We make people what they are; we can make them mean, hostile, and discontented, empty, and explosive; or we can make them constructive, creative, concerned, and committed . . . able to live with themselves and others. — Jimmy Hymes

As a five year old in kindergarten Dominique was a going concern—eager, enthusiastic, and ready for each new experience. He became deeply involved with work and play materials, with ideas and with the new people in his expanded world. Concepts and understandings widened, verbal facility and the ability to listen grew apace; curiosity and the desire to explore and discover never abated. During the year Dominique became aware of his place as part of the group; of the need, at times, of cooperative action; of the reasons for certain rules and regulations. Dominique moved through kindergarten confidently and with high interest. He was an important member of the group. He saw himself as a competent, cooperative individual—a learner.

Not too much later, this same small boy wandered through the school halls, eyes downcast, a bedraggled workbook clutched in one hand. Having been thoroughly tested and retested he was on his way to the daily remedial session. Dominique shuffled through each school day—haphazardly following some directions and ignoring others. He tried to laugh off the failure he had become. To anyone who tried to understand Dominique showed every indication of developing into a troublemaker, a non-reader, a non-learner, a potential drop-out. He saw himself as a failure. School had become a burden and a bore.

There are many disadvantaged children like Dominique—made so by teachers and administrators. Much as these people would like to blame the social setting, family life or the lack of it, poverty and its concomitants; they themselves are the chief culprits. All children come to us, and many of us still try to force on them a seemingly senseless kind of education taught by out-moded methods, using the weirdest materials—and in so doing we multiply "man's inhumanity to man."

Some of the disadvantages of the disadvantaged we are beginning to recognize for what they are rather than saying "He's lazy" or "She's stupid." These are tired children with so little energy, that they can muster no push, no go. And tiredness can turn into apathy.

These boys and girls live in a constant welter of noise; an environment full and cluttered with all age groups and a trashy collection of things all jammed into a small space. Within this confined place there is no time that is completely a child's, no spot he can call his own.

Noise is not conducive to developing discriminating listeners; shouts and commands such as "Shut up" or "Get out" do not help develop the best patterns of speech.

Pressures, genuine ones rather than the pseudo ones we invent for ourselves, are such that adult action has to be expedient, rather than appropriate. Usually, the adults place little or no value on education. What use has it been to them? (However to this last there are exceptions and they are usually feminine ones. I felt fleetingly sorry for one man in Arkansas when he had ordered me away from his shack upon hearing that Head Start classes were to be integrated. His wife met me at the car and said, "Now Honey, you-all come back next week and I'll be working on him." As she turned away from the car I heard her mutter, "Old Man, I'll be working on you hard.")

Half-hungry or hungry, dirty and frowsy, these children live close within a community either of their own kind known as "we" or "us" or their own kind with whom they are at war, "Them."

In a disadvantaged home there is little or no involvement with people, with things—and practically none with positive ideas. Angry people and their angry children can't see much hope in ideals.

> These children have had few opportunities for building a fund of background working knowledge on which they can draw. Their collection of concepts is meager and confused, they know a minimal amount about

cause and effect, they don't know how to organize or relate, they have had no experience in classifying or following through.

This nothing of a child, overwhelmed by frustrations and his sense of failure comes to school—and the very word itself brings added anxieties and new fears. One such child put it into words for all the rest, "I don't like nothin' about me." What a self-concept to live with, what a burden to bear, and what a habit to break.

What do we do for this child? We test him. We grade him. We segregate him and put him with those most like himself. And we have a hundred ways of telling him that he is more of a failure than he dreamed he was—the turn of a shoulder, taking a step backward, the veiled tone of voice, a quick censorious look, a superior smile. All of these shout at him and verify his feelings of nothingness, of worthlessness, of failure.

The disadvantaged child is usually not articulate when he comes to school and he soon learns that it is wise to become even less so. Some parroted answers are rewarded with teacher smiles, with words of approval. Still others seem to bring forth bursts of anger and constant reprimands. Actually it is safer to clam up . . .

Why do they fail? They fail because they are afraid, bored, and confused . . . School feels like this to children: It is a place where they make you go and where they tell you to do things and where they try to make your life unpleasant if you don't do them and don't do them right.—John Holt, in *Why Children Fail,* (Dell, 1964)

Because we are so everlastingly busy, teacher and administrator alike, with a certain amount of meaningless trivia we haven't time to help these children find their way out of their prisons—but each one has a possible escape route and when it is found he can start "becoming."

Herbert of the knife and Eddie of the hall took over a multitude of responsibilities and made classroom living infinitely easier for others. (I who use up sharp pencils as swiftly as some people eat peanuts can reach for one without looking to see if it is sharp. Audio-visual materials were delivered on schedule and kept in working order.)

Susan had become quite a reader and was "on call" to go to classrooms to read aloud. Picture books can be large and cumbersome—so Herbert went along to hold the book, turn the pages, and to offer moral support. After one such venture the duo returned to the room, both parties smiling triumphantly. I quietly blessed Susan when she said with deep conviction, "My but Herbert is a help."

Words and books may have been foreign stuff to Tammy but he could read people and situations accurately and swiftly. He rushed to me on the playground, pulled on my sleeve and shouted, "Hey!" I followed the line of his pointing finger only to see Maurey teetering on top of the slide. We both ran, and I might add, we were too late. Given half a chance Tammy could gather knowledge swiftly and in great detail. There were days when I went into Cincinnati immediately after school to have dinner and then to become lost in a sea of beautiful music. (No matter where I am, what conductors and artists I hear, the Cincinnati symphony remains my favorite). On this particular day I wore one of my prettiest dresses to school—one with a velvet collar. Velvet was completely new to Tammy. During story time he kept edging closer and closer to me. By some kind of unspoken communication he convinced Jon to move a bit and Tammy reached my side. He touched the velvet, he rubbed the nap one way and then the other—his eyes wide as he noted the change. He took a good long sniff. And finally, with a questioning look in his eye, he touched it with the tip of his tongue. Apparently satisfied, he settled down. He now knew many of the properties of velvet.

One of Tammy's first sentences came as he walked down the hall backward looking at that phenomenon, teacher in a hat. I don't wear one often but when I do it is worthy of attention. As Tammy took in the effect of the feathered creation he found words, "You got turkeys?"

Once the dirt was removed and she was freshly dressed, Ginny was revealed as pretty, gay, and intelligent. I had wanted to cut her matted locks but was glad I had desisted when she appeared with two braids wound into neat little buns over her ears.

When the truth was revealed, Jerry and his twin reminded me again that "to understand is to forgive."

The telephone linesman showed all of us what determination can do. Difficult as it was he struggled through book after book, class after class. He also added to the resources of the literature class by setting up the most comprehensive exhibit of comic books I've ever seen.

Talents in song, ability to work with their hands, swift compassion, fierce loyalty—these were revealed by the disadvantaged.

We say these children are not experienced—and we are wrong. They are too experienced in some ways—but not in matters relating to schools and books, talking and listening, paper and pencils. What we mean is that they are not experienced in the way *we* want them to be. Yet we are being paid to do the educating.

We must, if we want these children to be competent communicators, learn to accept the language patterns they bring to school. We nag at children, we harp at them telling them over and over again that their language is "wrong." No one died and left us in charge of English. A few teachers don't listen to what is being said—they listen for the errors so that they can boost their middle-class egos by pointing out

mistakes. Each time we say, "Now don't say that again!" we may be rejecting a good idea, an initial attempt at self expression, or an individual himself.

English is a growing, changing, vivid thing. After each conflict our GIs return from distant shores bringing back with them vivid expressions–groups of words akin to slang, for a time, but gradually winning their place in usage and finally in the dictionary. The disadvantaged child does much the same thing. In speaking he gets right to the heart of the subject he wants to bring to your attention. He is prone to skip the adverbs, articles, adjectives, and prepositions, but he can convey the message he wants to–if we will let him.

At the corner of 120th Street and Amsterdam in New York City, I felt a small hand firmly grasp mine. Immediately I was told, "Cross me." I wondered if these instructions had some religious connotation but fortunately the traffic light changed. My companion stepped out bravely with me in tow. These Puerto Rican children were told they must not cross the busy street alone and T. C. students served to ferry the small fry back and forth.

If someone calls a pencil a stick is that so dreadful? Telling someone to "fade" rather than "run" is a vivid description of the melting out of sight done by some boys. And if I get tired of using a toothbrush I can call it a pearl-pusher and enjoy it a bit more. Hearing a youngster say to his companion "Let's take our eaches and get" needs no translation. And his companion wouldn't think of saying, "Don't you know better than that? You should say 'You take your marbles and I will take mine. Then perhaps we should go home.'" Such phrases might have ended a budding friendship.

Language; the social group, the babbling baby who learns the sounds, the time-holding acts that make society live and learn longer than any of its groups or members; language in words and motions, in pictures and attitudes, in poetry and priestly poses; language that makes the word a fact or a broken tooth precious and puts man at the still center of the turning universe. Language is the seed bed of miracles. It makes man human. It brings permanence to a changing world. Yet it too changes. Meanings rub against each other. Words are slurred and slipped into each other. Symbols rot and die as new ones are born in pain and work and glory. And all the while words are fed to babbling babies who learn them and use them to change the world as they change the word.–Frank G. Jennings, in *This Is Reading*, (Delta, 1965)

There are many things which help our disadvantaged child "become" and the most important are warm, sensitive persons who treat each individual with dignity and respect, who are kind and stable, flexible, inventive, and imaginative–and most of all, accepting. These teachers are the ones who know that there are many paths to any single goal–and that each goal must be weighed as to its appropriateness, its value.

Frequently administrators, caught up in some weird feelings of power and importance, block the teacher's every attempt to help children. Isn't the role of the principal one of freeing each teacher to do her best for the students? A good principal can cut through red tape, give the teacher the time and space she needs, see that his or her energies are used for children, think with her, open up the way–and provide books and other materials as needed.

I will always be grateful for the fact that, at long last, needed monies are available for essential educational materials and that through Head Start and the various titles we are taking a long but too swift look at current practices. I am grateful that we have money; I'm afraid of the way some of us are spending it. "Hardware" is being purchased which is destined to sit out the years in storage spots and become a symbol of this generation's wastefulness to another one up-coming. There are many fine educational materials; the market is also being flooded with worthless expensive junk. Some educational organizations are going into action to sort and evaluate these things. Meanwhile it is well to remember that unless materials purchased are recognized by teachers as useful and helpful they represent complete waste.

One set of tasks should be well in hand before we move into any academic area with the disadvantaged child. He must be helped to feel good, to be clean and realize that he is suitably clothed, to have two good meals and, if he needs it, an extra snack at school.

We have to help a nobody become a somebody. One of the amazing things is how much it helps to have one place, one spot that is a child's very own. This can be as simple as a decorated cardboard box clearly marked with a name, a strong cardboard book case, a good-sized cubbyhole. Hopefully it should be more than a place to put a sweater–we want many of these children to become collectors of valuable (to them) junk. A full length mirror would be the second thing I would add to a room. Try putting one up next week and then watch.

Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are really all one; developing hand in hand. These, the language arts, are the areas which open many closed doors. They make the past, the present, as well as time beyond the now, our own. Through them we can know the great people of all times, the near-great, the tawdry, and the lost.

Experiences with language should be pleasant ones. Speaking, with its concomitant listening, is the most important of the language arts for disadvantaged boys and girls. In addition to accepting the child's language patterns the teacher herself will need to do a certain amount of talking–to prime the pump as it were. Within this talk there will be many pauses, many unspoken or quietly offered invitations for others to speak. And of course the teacher will be using standard, conventional language. As in so much of our work with disadvantaged children many talking-listening times should be on a one to one basis. In this type of talking situation the advantages, social and economic, of using conventional language in certain situations can be explored with older students.

The one to one situations can at times move to discussions and conversations in small groups. Help a small group of teenagers start to talk,

then go away and leave them around a tape recorder. After this you become the student of language as you replay and listen carefully.

Then use the tape recorder yourself. Teachers need to listen to themselves. Are the things they are saying worth listening to? Are they, like the brook, going on and on forever? No one can be blamed for "tuning-out" a fusser, a complainer. Virginia Axline's *Dibs*[1] knew he could learn a lot "standing around the edge . . ." I would add this works best when the student is tuned-in on something worth his listening and watching time.

We take listening for granted, not giving it the place of importance it deserves in language development. It implies much more than the response to directions and orders. In time, it comes to mean being attentive as teacher and students discuss, suggest, explain, and converse.

It is greatly to the advantage of the teacher to speak in a soft clear tone with these boys and girls who have been bombarded with shouts and yells. And she will also see that the noise level of the room varies. There will be times of blessed quiet, times filled with a busy hum, and the noisier times when all are actively and busily engaged.

There should be at least one time every day when the teacher reads aloud – stories, poems, or books. These can be a brush with magic which can open up the whole area of reading and literature and make it a lifelong experience. Also, this listening time can lead to impromptu improvisations of a play or the lead for a dramatic production.

There should be time to hear the squeak of new shoes, the sound of thunder, the thump of hail, the song of the first spring bird, or the nothingness of sound in a snow-covered world.

Talking, listening, and thinking have to be about something—they cannot occur in a vacuum. Disadvantaged boys and girls are concept-locked. There is so much they need to find out about this world, its laws, its lands, and its many creatures—human and otherwise. They must have abundant first-hand experiences—opportunities to taste, touch, see, hear and smell. They need help in learning to gather meaning, someone to sniff the flowers with them, someone to also relish the taste of gingerbread, someone to give them earphones and special glasses. I will always be grateful to the artist who helped me see how nature's colors changed as the sun goes behind and emerges from each summer cloud.

Disadvantaged boys and girls need to live in an environment that is rich, stimulating, and varied. Things help greatly. Two toy telephones come next on the list of necessities for young children. Hats of all varieties help and it's our job to see that heads are in such good condition that hats can be exchanged. Puppets and a stage to hide behind have helped many a shy speaker.

Young boys and girls need all kinds of household and play things as they try on life (like we used to take dresses on and off paper dolls) to see how it fits.

A starter list for youngsters could include:

Sink
Stove
Clean up things
Dishes
Silver
Dolls
Bed
Blocks and boards
Things to crawl through, over, and under
Film strips
Pots and pans
Table and chairs
Rocking chairs
Desk
Shopping cart
An old auto
Wheel toys—wagons, wheel barrows, trucks, trikes
Boxes and more boxes
Dress-up things
Tapes

Bringing a pet into the life of a speech-locked child can be the needed key. The first sounds of affection I ever heard from one child came as he talked to our lamb. Rabbits or gerbils, chickens and ducks, kittens and puppies offer no threats. It is exciting to cook and then eat the product of your efforts. A lot of learning goes into making fifteen servings of Brown Betty.

There are many easy trips which can be rich in learnings for a child in addition to the museum, the places of business and industry, the farm, the library, and the zoo.

Going around a city block really noticing, hearing, and seeing;

Walking through the woods in the same way;

Going to visit a baby—out in the yard in a play pen;

Taking a ride on a street car or bus; if possible, a train or a plane;

Unhurriedly exploring a pond in the spring;

Going through a department or a hardware store;

Knowing all the joy and pain of making choices as one goes on a fifty cent shopping spree (buying a real flower, mid winter).

A simple version of a charm school can do wonders for middle or upper grade girls. My office, fortunately, is in one of the Brookline areas bordering disadvantaged. The boys and girls of Lincoln School have taken over all the dull routine jobs I dreaded. They collate, staple, and count out for distribution the Language Arts Bulletins, they handle the library, change the bulletin boards. Now and then I take a group out for pizza and spumoni plus the leavening of a little salad at one of our best Italian restaurants. The first group of girls I took went into hysterical giggles as a doorman opened the car door. In fact giggles punctuated every activity. With the help of our "charm school" they still enjoy themselves mightily on these excursions, but are not nearly as easily embarrassed.

To listen to a good folk-singing group and be invited to join in has been a rewarding, toe-

[1] Virginia Axline, DIBS, (Houghton Mifflin, 1966).

tapping experience. A square dance group demonstrated and finally brought embarrassed boys and shy girls into each square who were soon caught up in the fun of it all. To watch or be a magician's aid, to help make a doll dress, to help build a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, to be an assistant as a hide-away or a tree house comes into being, to discover the comfort of being rocked a bit, these are all rewarding experiences. There should be two rocking chairs, one large and one small, in every classroom. We have multiple playgrounds for adults—bowling alleys, theaters, dance halls. And so few really good play places for children. Great Britain and Denmark have moved far ahead in creating children's villages—playgrounds where there are all sorts of wonderful things.

I wish I could give each growing child a Madison County farm with Little Darby Creek running through it. There were hills and trees, a companion dog and a clutter of cats, little pigs and calves and, once in a while, a foal. Helpful adults on the edge were ready to help but not inclined to infringe. And, most important, there was lots of free-flowing lovely time in which to imagine and pretend, investigate and explore, make and do. Every adult working with children should read again, *Where Did You Go? Out. What Did You Do? Nothing.*[2]—nothing but a great deal of learning and discovering. K. E. Eble in his new book calls play *The Perfect Education* (Macmillan, 1967).

Some of these disadvantaged come to us as readers in the sense that they can gather meaning from situations. We have helped them build and organize into their background knowledge many concepts. They have done some genuine learning about cause and effect, sequencing, (and the best way to learn it is by playing Three Billy Goats Gruff), having had initial experiences with classification and organization, and through much oral expression have become more wise in the way of words. In some schools we start the reading of print with their key words as first described in Sylvia Ashton Warner's *Spinster* (Simon Schuster, 1959). When words like "knife" and "murder" are asked for we don't blink an eye. We simply write them on a card and give them to the child. It hurts when they ask for "divorce" and "custody". From words and phrases we move into sentences.

Tammy, the inarticulate, helped me prepare the mid-morning snack one day. As he held the box of straws up he said, "It looks like a beehive." These words were immediately incorporated into a three line story with Tammy's name at its close.

We broke out in a rash of story telling, chart making, and reading. Lynore and Virginia hurried into the room, just a little late. They could hardly wait to tell what they had seen.

It was raining Ginko leaves.

The walk was covered.

There was a solid path of them.

Picture a mite-sized clown named Lee telling us,

> "I went fishing with Daddy in Maine. I felt something on my line. I ran to the car and yelled, 'Help, Daddy, help.' It was a big old fish. Mommy canned it and it rotted."

These are good stories and there were literally hundreds of them. Only a few things went into their making a time for children to talk and/or write (without fear of being corrected either as to their subject or their patterns of speaking and writing), an appreciative audience, be it only me, someone to notice imagery and to point out the delightful use of words, and a satisfied feeling of having made a genuine contribution.

Van Allen has pointed out that what a child can think can be said; what is said can be recorded; this can then be read and the whole experience re-enjoyed. While doing this boys and girls are learning about the structure of the language and its phonic content as well as starting to read printed material. I would hope that most disadvantaged children can be helped to develop reading skills on an individualized basis, moving from book to book as he moves from interest to interest.

We have pushed too early and too hard in the matter of written expression. Some children will develop power in this area quite early in their school careers. They, with the teachers, become the scribes for the whole group.

But there will come a time when each child feels a need to write a message, copy a recipe, make a greeting card, or compose a letter.

Nancy, the more mature of a pair, wrote Howard a note one day and casually dropped it on his desk as she passed by. Now Howard was relatively uninitiated in reading and much less so in writing so he brought the note to me for translation. One quick look and I suggested to him that it was a rather personal message and read in a whisper, "I love you." Howard beamed.

I called a hasty conference with the two and said I realized that this was a rather personal matter but I would like to share this way of writing down talk with the rest of the class. They agreed that I might do this—after all everyone knew that Howard liked Nancy and vice versa. So I pasted the note on an attractive background, told the class about it, put it up for all to admire, and sat back to see what happened. What happened was that the traffic pattern became so congested that we had to set aside a five-minute period to get all the notes delivered.

There needs to be, always, some real reason to write (like writing a manuscript of a speech for purposes of distribution) and trumped up reasons aren't enough. Too often when someone does write at our insistence we take a red pencil and make critical remarks all over it. This procedure is calculated to alienate all students from putting their thoughts on paper.

We expect all children to be so eternally verbal. We are, we learned this way, but not all of us are alike.[3] Try giving inexpensive cameras

[2] Robert Paul Smith, *Where Did You Go? Out. What Did You Do? Nothing.* (New York, W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1957).

[3] We have been saying this for years. When will we begin to believe it and adapt our practice in terms of the belief? There will be many arguments until the selection has been made—but these too are worthwhile.

to a group of non-verbal students–then give them an assignment, perhaps "a wall." First photographs will simply show a wall–sky above, earth below. Try it again later. All kinds of subtle variations will come–a small vine emerging from a crannie, the pattern of fallen rocks, an unexpected opening. Or use the camera to answer the questions–who? what? when? where? Or give students all kinds of art and junk materials out of which to express feelings–jealousy, anger, hurt, and despair.

Let them listen, script or poem or story in hand, to someone reading it aloud by record or tape. I wish I could establish many listening posts. Wouldn't it be fun to listen, as you turn the pages of the book, to the school superintendent reading *The Three Tailors?* Let older students discuss (around a tape recorder) the wording, the appeal, of collected ads from popular magazines and the daily papers. Ask students to select one, any one TV show to watch on a certain evening to do an analysis of plot, timing and characterization.

Almost any teacher, and particularly those of the disadvantaged, would do well to set aside testing and the giving of grades. Again I turn to *Dibs.*[4]

> What are the purposes of examinations, anyhow? Are they to increase our educational attainment? Or are they instruments used to bring suffering and humiliation and deep hurt to a person who is trying so hard to succeed?

I would also suggest that teachers of the disadvantaged, on the whole, desert the established curriculum. Introduce the new, experiment with the untried. A group of hulking teenagers were held entranced a few weeks ago as a girl from a speech class introduced them to hurt toes and injured pride as she recited "The Dance."

Learn to develop jokes and laughter with the group. I was once known as the teacher who had the most fun on April Fool's day.

[4] Virginia Axline, op. cit.

Let students make plans and activate them to either facing their mistakes or anticipating them. One young group was carried away and invited everyone they knew to a watermelon party. As the guests assembled and the hosts viewed the shrinking watermelon they calmly invited some guests "to go home now and come back tomorrow." Poor children, they had another difficult time when they decided to show some "outlanders" how delicious turnip greens and corn bread might be. The corn bread recipe was tripled and they purchased what they felt were scads of turnip greens. If you have ever watched greens shrink to almost nothing you know that, again, there had to be two parties.

Don't make these students "pay" for everything they read or do or say by having them fill in blanks, draw lines under, over, around, or between words. We have made it all so "worky" when actually learning is exciting fun.

Let there be self-selection. Set up many ways to legally work off tensions and frustration.

A pair of boxing gloves close to the outside door helped my children through many storms. There were always dirty brushes to be washed –for water is soothing. I have known older students who worked long hard hours changing a barn into a gym.

Accept the student's offering however it comes and consider it with him–again on a one to one basis. Recognize his mood and give him time. Anyone pushed into a corner has no time to think or consider, to weigh values–he fights back. Beth, in the midst of a temper tantrum, declared she was going to tear up everything in the room–and started. I didn't know what to do and characteristically started picking up and putting away in her wake. Accidentally, I had given Beth and myself the thing we needed most–time.

As the disadvantaged-advantaged grow and learn and become, they will give each teacher riches to last all through the years. Each success is a triumph and few are small.

> The telephone linesman stayed after the class sessions during which he had talked about *Six Feet Six*[5]–good tough reading for a junior high student. He had taken the literature class so that he could learn to read. Fortunately we had begun our study with picture books.
>
> One day George crawled out from under a table to watch a fire engine go shrieking by. The next day he listened to at least half of a fire engine story.
>
> The song of the little gypsy lifted all the ache and tiredness from my weary bones. I saw that she left with a box of crayons in her pocket.
>
> Eddie stumbled over his feet and blushed to the roots of his hair (and one teacher gasped) as he came forward to receive a well deserved citizenship award.
>
> Jon, the most popular boy in the class, saved a seat beside him for Ginny.
>
> Watching the power of a good idea excite children is breath taking. After a fifth grade had studied some of the pioneers in our area and had been particularly impressed by Johnnie Appleseed they decided that they must so live that they would become "good ancestors."
>
> Jerry and Joe, the twins, had shaken their heads dismally when questioned about their milk money. I had been digging into my coin purse to make up for their deficit. Then on this February morning they put an outsize valentine under the overflowing box. Ruefully I estimated the cost of this heart–more than several bottles of milk. I hardly needed to be told but I had to listen–
>
> "We saved all our milk money," said Jerry.
>
> "We spent it all on this one," added Joe.
>
> Operation "open and look" came to a sudden halt as the huge envelope was placed in my hands. From the envelope there emerged a vast limousine of gold and white cardboard, held together with honeycombs of red and pink tissue paper. Doves, cupids, and hearts

[5] Bessie Rowland James, *Six Feet Six,* Bobbs.

perched at precarious angles and hovered over a lovely lady and her handsome escort. The group gasped in unison. It was a valentine beyond imagination's wildest fancy.
Did they hear me murmur gratefully, "A solid gold milk truck."

It was all I could do to keep my composure one morning when I lightly tapped Carl's closed hand and asked, "Is there something interesting in there?"

All in one breath he said, "I call it my jelly stone. It's white on the top and bottom and pink in between."

Cho flourished as he had some tender loving care. I knew I must never desert him so when it was time for me to leave Korea the two of us went to see the gentleman in charge of Foster Parents.

It wasn't the usual procedure for child and parent to select each other but an exception was made. Cho is now on his own and is a printer.

One time when I returned to the basin school in which I had taught as an alternative to speech making I took Helen Mackintosh with me. The teacher wished to talk with us and suggested that the boys and girls make pictures of the guests.

There is Helen pink-cheeked, blue-eyed, looking very gay in her bright green suit. My red and black print dress is easily distinguishable —and in every picture I am as soft a dusky brown as the students I had grown to love.

Love and learning go from heart to heart easily when there is someone whose heart encompasses your cares and woes. We must strive to help boys and girls find life and learning both worthwhile. They may even discover with Charlie Brown that "Happiness is finding out you're not so dumb after all."

Once these children find that they can change themselves they may realize that they can also change their world.

If today is good and has a ray of hope, tomorrow can be better.

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